

The Philadelphia Inquirer

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CHANGE FOR VENERABLE ALTERNATIVE ARTS SPACE

PAINTED BRIDE'S RISKY MOVE

Decision to sell the colorful building creates anxiety among emerging artists.



The Painted Bride's sale raises questions such as: What will happen to Isaiah Zagar's mosaics? TOM GRALISH / Staff Photographer



GENEVA HEFFERNAN / Staff

“We were everything for everybody when we started. At the time, that made perfect sense, because there wasn't anybody else. But things started popping up in a more focused way, and the Bride wasn't as necessary in that arena.”

Laurel Raczka, Painted Bride executive director

By Stephan Salisbury
CULTURE WRITER

When the Painted Bride Art Center announced at the end of November that it would sell its mosaic-sheathed building at 230 Vine St. in Old City and use the proceeds to become a “project-based” organization, the Philadelphia cultural world responded with a mixture of sadness — and not a little anxiety.

“This decision says a lot about arts funding in the city,” said performer Nell Bang-Jensen, 29. “It scares me as a younger artist.”

Yet executive director Laurel Raczka, 57, says the Bride's funding is relatively stable at the moment. There is no operating deficit and the only long-term debt is the building mortgage, which will be paid off in 2019.

Nevertheless, “we've been struggling each year to sustain our budget needs and funding,” Raczka said. “There's more competition — so many events happening [in the city], so many venues. And to sustain this building, we have to fix it up.”

The Painted Bride, the city's oldest alternative arts organization, would seem to be a fading flower competing for sunlight on an increasingly indifferent and crowded landscape.

But not everyone who has an interest in the Bride — particularly the many artists it has touched — believes shedding the building is the

See **PAINTED BRIDE** on A8

“The space and the incredible role the Bride has played is not something you throw away. ... Once it's gone, it will never be replaced. To discard it, to me, it feels reckless, unless it's the only way to survive.”

Tim Miller, performance artist and founder of art spaces in New York and Santa Monica, Calif.

INCOME-TAX OVERHAUL

GOP forges a deal on taxes

House, Senate compromise lowers business rate to 21 percent.

By Stephen Ohlemacher,
Andrew Taylor, and Marcy Gordon
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — Confident congressional Republicans forged an agreement Wednesday on an overhaul of the nation's tax laws that

would provide generous tax cuts for corporations and the wealthiest Americans — Donald Trump among them — and deliver the first major legislative accomplishment to the GOP president.

Middle- and low-income families would get smaller tax cuts, though Trump and GOP leaders have billed the package as a huge benefit for the middle class. The measure would scrap a major tax requirement of former President Barack Obama's Affordable Care Act, a step toward the ultimate GOP goal of unraveling the law.

“The cynical voices that opposed tax cuts grow smaller and weaker, and the American people grow stronger,” Trump said at the White House. “This is for people of middle income, this is for companies that are going to create jobs. This is for very, very special people, the great people of America.” See **TAX PLAN** on A10

TAX PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

37%

The top rate for individuals, down from 39.6%.

21%

The rate for businesses, down from 35% but up from 20% in the House and Senate bills.

\$750K

The cap on a new mortgage whose interest can be deducted, down from \$1 million.

\$10K

The maximum deduction for state, local and property taxes combined.

ALABAMA SENATE RACE

Chastened Republicans respond with fingerpointing

By Sean Sullivan, Elise Viebeck,
David Weigel, and Michael Scherer
WASHINGTON POST

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Stunned Republicans began casting blame Wednesday over their failure to hold a Senate seat in the Deep South, where Alabama Democrat Doug Jones stitched together just enough support to win amid voter backlash to accusations of sexual misconduct against his firebrand GOP rival.

Even as Republican Roy Moore — down by more than 20,000 votes in Tuesday's special election — refused to concede the race, members of the GOP began pointing fingers at one another for his defeat after being steamrolled in Virginia's elections last month.

See **ALABAMA** on A4

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IMMIGRATION AND SANCTUARY

For family, church is now home

They were to be deported. Mother fled Mexico after 3 relatives were killed.

By Jeff Gammage
STAFF WRITER

An undocumented immigrant mother has taken refuge inside the Church of the Advocate in North Philadelphia with her four children, declaring sanctuary in an effort to avoid a deportation to Mexico that she says could get them killed.

It is the second time since President Trump's election that a person or family has sought protection from immigration authorities by moving into a Philadelphia church.

Carmela Apolonio Hernandez, 36, had been ordered to leave the United States by Dec. 15, following denial of the family's petition for asylum. She spent eight days knocking on the doors of churches in South Jersey and Pennsylvania. See **SANCTUARY** on A4



Carmela Apolonio Hernandez and children (from left) Fidel, 15; Yoselin, 11; Edwin, 9, and Keyri, 13. MICHAEL BRYANT / Staff Photographer

TRUDY RUBIN | **A14**

Trump's confusion over Jerusalem

ROCK AND ROLL HALL OF FAME | **B6**

Overdue honors for Philadelphia figures

